



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE MEDIA RELATIONS DIVISION

JACKIE LACEY • District Attorney
SHARON J. MATSUMOTO • Chief Deputy District Attorney

JEAN GUCCIONE • Director
JANE ROBISON • Asst. P.I.O.

April 10, 2013

Rockefeller imposter convicted in 1985 San Marino murder

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles jury took less than a day to convict a master con man who crisscrossed the country under assumed identities, including posing as a Rockefeller, of the first-degree of a San Marino man nearly 30 years ago.

The jury of six women and six men also found Christian K. Gerhartsreiter, 52, guilty of using both blunt and sharp objects to fatally bludgeon and stab 27-year-old John Sohus.

Deputy District Attorney Habib A. Balian with the Major Crimes Division prosecuted the case.

Gerhartsreiter, a German national better known as Clark Rockefeller, is facing 27 years to life in prison when he returns June 26 for sentencing before Superior Court Judge George G. Lomeli.

Sohus and his wife, Linda, were last seen alive in February 1985. The couple lived with John's mother on Lorain Road in San Marino. Living in a guest house on the same property was a man calling himself Christopher Chichester.

Shortly after the couple disappeared, the man calling himself Chichester vanished. Investigators later identified Chichester as Gerhartsreiter.

In May 1994, a body was discovered buried in the backyard of the Sohus home on Lorain Road. The remains were later identified as those of John Sohus. An investigation determined he was killed by blunt force trauma to the head. He also had been stabbed several times.

Although Gerhartsreiter was not charged with Linda's murder, Balian argued to the jury that the defendant killed her, too. Linda's body has never been found.

During 10 days of testimony, 45 witnesses were called and 160 exhibits were entered into evidence for the prosecution.

Homicide detectives from the Sheriff's Department investigated the case.

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